

EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

East Providence City Hall

145 Taunton Avenue,

East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

School Committee Meeting

August 18, 2009

Open Session

Mr. Carcieri called the meeting to order at 6:00PM. School Committee Members present: Luisa Abatecola, Shannon Barbosa, Robert Faria, Steven Santos, Anthony Carcieri. Also present: Dr. Mario F. Cirillo, Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Edward Daft, Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Lonnie Barham, Chief Operating Officer, Dan Kinder, Esq. and Sara Rapport, Esq.

A motion was made by Mr. Santos to move to executive session, pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5 (a) (2) Litigation, to discuss Collective Bargaining with respect to the , Teachers' Contract, Teacher Assistants' Contract, Custodians' Contract, Secretaries' Contract, Principals' Association Contract and also move, pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5 (a)(2), to convene in executive session to: amend the minutes of the 9/24/08 executive session; and to discuss ongoing litigation in and related to EPSC v. EPEA, C.A. 089-1421, seconded by Mr. Faria, Vote 5-0.

The School Committee returned to public session at 7:15 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a Moment of Silence were observed.

A motion was made by Mrs. Barbosa to seal the minutes of the executive session, seconded by Mrs. Abatecola. Roll Call Vote: Mrs. Abatecola, aye; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.

Sara Rapport, Esq. reported votes taken in executive session: The Committee reports that the following votes were taken by the Committee in the executive session today, August 18, 2009:

(1) The Committee voted unanimously to amend the minutes of the executive session to reflect that on September 24, 2008, the Committee voted to file an action under RIGL § 16-2-21.4, known as a "Caruolo Action," against the City of East Providence, for FY 08. The vote of September 24, 2008 was as follows: Anthony Carcieri (yes); Robert Faria (yes); Mildred Morris (yes). Stephen DeCastro (no); and Steven Santos (no).

(2) The Committee voted to seal the minutes of the August 12, 2008 executive session of the Committee meeting of August 12, 2008. The vote was unanimous.

In addition, the Committee reports that the following votes were taken

at prior Executive Sessions:

(3) First, a vote was taken during executive session on September 9, 2008, to seal the minutes of the executive session of September 9, 2008.

(4) Second, a vote was taken in executive session on October 27, 2008, to seal the minutes of the executive session on October 27, 2008. In each instance, the vote to seal the minutes of the executive session was unanimous.

Mr. Carcieri, Chair, solicited a motion and a second to re-vote to seal the minutes of the executive session for the following dates:

(1) August 12, 2008

(2) September 9, 2008

(3) October 27, 2008

Motion by Mrs. Barbosa to (re)vote to seal the minutes of Executive Session for the following dates: (a) August 12, 2008; (b) September 9, 2008; and (c) October 27, 2008; Seconded by Mr. Faria. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.

Student/Teacher Recognition - None

Reports

Sub-Committee Reports-None

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Barham presented the Personnel Report on Retirements/Resignations & Leaves of Absence:

RETIREMENTS

Joan Midgley Supervisory Assistant iV Oldham

RESIGNATIONS

Kimberly Markarian Art Teacher iV EPHS

Marianne Korney Foreign Language-EPHS

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE (13 Weeks)

Gina Cunha Science Teacher iV EPHS

Approx. November 11, 2009

Jodie Audet

Special Ed/Resource

Teacher iV MM

Approx. September 14,

2009

Stacey Azevedo Elementary iV Grade 5, Orlo Elementary

Approx. September 14, 2009

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Nancy Gage Speech - Language Pathologist - MMS

2009-2010 School Year

Cheryl Comley Math Teacher - MMS

2009-2010 School Year

PARENTAL LEAVE

Alissa Tatarian

Special Education

Teacher - MMS

2009-2010 School Year

Kerri Gravina Elementary Grade 3-Whiteknact

2009-2010 School Year

Mr. Barham presented the Financial Report as of July 31, 2009; Summary of Revenues indicated overall average of revenue received at 70% which is about 5% less than where we should be at this date; Summary of Expenditures indicates 79.36% expended, which is slightly above where we should be (75%); we are slightly above on salary and benefits; those numbers should equalize over the summer.

Facilities Report ;V Mr. Barham reported that safety issues at the High School will be corrected before school opens on September 8th; work is also on-going regarding all significant non-safety issues that could have an adverse impact on the educational environment. A Facilities Report dated 8/18/09 was presented to the School Committee

Joe Tavares, Facilities Manager, reported that most major construction for the Bradley Program has been completed at Martin Middle School and he thanked city high way department personnel for assistance with the driveway. Dr. Cirillo also thanked Toby and Steve from the city highway department for above and beyond work and for outstanding cooperation received from the city. Mr. Faria asked about a completion date for work being done at Silver Spring. Dr. Cirillo has been assured this work will be done by the start of school.

Dr. Cirillo received a letter on 7/29/09 from NEASC continuing the high school's accreditation; The letter further stated that "while the commission acknowledges the school's progress as noted in the letter, until all concerns have been satisfactorily resolved the school remains on warning for the Standards for Accreditation on Instruction, School Resources for Learning and Community Resources for Learning." The Commission listed several commendations including the Superintendent's Restructuring Plan. The letter also indicated areas of concern which need attention: curriculum document, completion of required remedies identified during inspections, developing and implementing a plan to ensure that equipment is maintained and replaced as needed and verification that issues related to the school's cleanliness have been remedied.

Dr. Caswell explained the two needs to be met: a New Curriculum

Template and a Curriculum Map; a plan for K-12. Dr. Caswell advised that over a four year span, we will have a K-12 curriculum and teachers will know grade level by quarters. School wide rubrics, also a concern of the visiting committee, are not used consistently over the schools.

Ms. Sheehan, high school principal, will be organizing a committee to review and revise school-wide rubrics, if needed. Ms. Sheehan has made those commitments; she believes both issues will be solved in one year time.

Dr. Cirillo advised there is a plan in mind to satisfy the commission and is confident we are well on the way to remedy; he hopes to get off warning status by October, 2010.

Qualified School Construction Bond Program iV tabled iV RIDE Representative will attend the September meeting.

Consent Agenda

Motion by Mr. Faria to approve the minutes of meetings held on June 9, 2009 June 23, 2009 July 1, 2009, and July 15, 2009, seconded by Mrs. Barbosa. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.

Personnel Appointments: Presented by Mr. Barham:

APPOINTMENTS

District

Samuel Conklin Network Technician

Patricia Whalen Benefits/H.R. Manager

Jennifer Preiss Social Worker (Secondary)

Melanie Lane Social Worker (Elementary)

Elisy Blanco Social Worker (Bradley Partnership)

High School

Marshall Duran Guidance Counselor

Katherine Newman Guidance Counselor

Nicole DiFillippo Guidance Counselor (3/5)

Lorraine Martell Nurse/Teacher

Amanda Broccoli English

Gloria Martin Math Teacher

Keith Anderson Social Studies/Business Teacher

Lynn Pinch Spanish Teacher (1YR)

Bobby Rathbone Music Teacher/Band Director

Nicole Delanos Art Teacher

Alexandra Salisbury Art Teacher (1YR)

Sara Laurino Physical Education Teacher

Nicholas Shattuck Special Education Teacher/Resource

Laura Balasco Special Ed Teacher/Resource (1yr)

Kimberly Forrest Special Education Teacher/Lifeskills

Roger Farmer Conflict Resolution Specialist

Marc Thibault Conflict Resolution Specialist

Middle School

Kelly Love English Teacher ¡V MMS

Katie Gorton Math Teacher - MMS

Nichole Poirier Math Teacher - MMS

Amanda Sawyer Math Teacher (1YR)

Kelly Reese Science Teacher- MMS

Laura Mortarelli English Language Learners Teacher- MMS

Gloria Johnson Art Teacher - MMS

Lindsay Sinclair Reading Teacher ¡V RMS

Elementary

Danielle DelFarno Reading Teacher ¡V Orlo Elementary

Lori Facer Reading Teacher (1YR) ¡V Whiteknact

Laura Enos .5 Kindergarten Teacher ¡V Francis

Arthur Sherman Physical Education Teacher ¡V Elementary

` Multiple Schools

Catherine Guglielmo Special Education ¡V Whiteknact

Laura Laurence Library/Media Teacher ¡V Elementary

Multiple Schools

Margaret Quinn Nurse/Teacher 1:1-Waddington

Megan Pace Supervisory Assistant-Oldham

Coaches

Brian Petsch Cross Country Coach - RMS

Jean Petisce-Lynch Soccer Cheerleading Coach - MMS

Jean Petisce-Lynch Basketball Cheerleading Coach-MMS

Mike Almeida Cross Country Coach - MMS

Jessica Pasquarelli Asst. Swim Coach - EPHS

Debra Bellamy Asst. Outdoor Boys¡ Track ¡V EPHS

Motion: Mrs. Abatecola/Second: Mr. Santos. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye. Mr. Faria commented that benefits position should be consolidated with city.

Recalls of Personnel

RECALL FROM LAYOFF

Isabel Evans Secretary - Martin Middle School

Motion: Mrs. Barbosa/Second: Mrs. Abatecola. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, aye; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.

Requisitions

Bill Lists

Warrant #000918 8/13/09 \$ 241,696.59

Warrant #000919 8/14/09 \$1,848,588.23

Warrant #000906 7/9/09 \$ 62,785.07

Warrant #000908 7/15/09 \$ 29,342.00

Warrant #000910 7/22/09 \$ 142,954.51

Warrant #000913 8/5/09 \$ 14,544.48

Motion: Mr. Faria/Second: Mrs. Barbosa. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, aye; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.

Contracts

Mr. Barham advised regarding an emergency contract awards:

„X McGuire Group ¡V a Code Assessment Study in order to analyze all building and fire code deficiencies at the high school

„X Maron Construction Company - award for interior doors at \$19,800 to be awarded under an emergency contract; this will assist in building officials allowing us to be able to open schools.

Motion by Mrs. Barbosa to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent for the awarding of emergency contracts, seconded by Mr. Faria. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, aye; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.

Action Items

Dr. Cirillo presented the educational services agreement worked out with East Providence School Department and Bradley Hospital to provide special education services for students within the school district. Initially 63 students will be included in the program; the framework agreement is being worked out and the school department expects to save \$570,000 the first year with students coming back into the district. The agreement includes enrollment, responsibilities, location, facilities management and the tuition structure. A motion was made to approve the agreement by Mr. Faria, seconded by Mr. Santos. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, aye; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.

Dr. Cirillo requested that the School Committee approve a Lease/Purchase Agreement with Hewlett Packard Company for computer and networking equipment. He explained that the arrangement is a good deal for the district and will help with a cycle of renewal to look at what we have and be able to update. He felt this was a tremendous opportunity for both students and teachers. Ms. Kelly Ahrens, Technology Director, reported on the status of the district's current computer network system and will be submitting a three year plan at the September 8, 2009 meeting. Ms. Ahrens asked for School Committee support, as 85% of the current networking equipment was installed 11 years ago; the equipment is 16 years, 80% of the servers are at least ten years old along with network switches. The lease will accomplish updates of the equipment. A motion was made by Mr. Faria to approve the lease agreement, seconded by Mrs. Barbosa.

Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, aye; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.

Dr. Cirillo recommended approval of a School/City Deficit Elimination Plan, which provides a remedy to pay off the school department deficit from 2009 to 2015. Mayor Larisa added that this intra governmental plan is both historic and heroic. The School Committee inherited a \$5 million deficit, \$4 million in one year, and with the city on the verge of bankruptcy, taxpayers would have received an increase in tax bills of \$500-\$600. The Auditor General requested a plan to fix the problem and the School Committee has

done their best to balance the needs of the taxpayers while addressing the needs of the School Department, not on the backs of taxpayers and keeping in mind the tax cap of 3.5% The City requiring: intent of meals tax \$500,000 to pay down debt, not money in operating budget; if we lose suit in court, bankruptcy will occur and double digit increases in taxes. The Mayor urged passage; the School Committee worked with the City Council on this, rather than like other cities with Caruolo actions; when this is approved by the Auditor General, it will cancel the Caruolo action.

Mr. Faria commented that a prior agreement was dissolved on a commitment from teachers to negotiate a plan with police and fire at the time, but collective bargaining did not happen, articles were written about savings and by the third year, the arrangement cost more. He said these are very difficult times and there are no easy answers, but it was important to him regarding language on meals tax which is supposed to deal one fiscal year at time; in his mind, this is the most logical way.

Mrs. Abatecola asked if the meals tax is in the operating budget and now it is not, where will we get the \$500,000? Dr. Cirillo explained that reintegration of special education will show savings.

Mr. Santos asked if it is certain that the Auditor General will give approval; this is a logical plan which will eliminate the deficit and cancel the Caruolo action.

Mayor Larisa related that this is the best we can do; the money is not there; it is not going to be easy; the vendors have been deferred; we cannot get \$3-4 million in cash. He will send the agreement to the Auditor General now that it has been approved by both bodies and advise the School Committee when he receives an answer.

A motion to approve the agreement was made by Mr. Faria, seconded by Mrs. Barbosa. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, aye; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.

Announcements ¶ Dr. Cirillo stated that a Special Budget Meeting will be held on August 25, 2009 at 7PM

Public Comment-Communications

Budget/Legal/Restructuring/Technology/Teaching Positions Mr. Gouveia asked if the union prevailed, what is the plan. Mr. Carcieri advised bankruptcy, since we would have to pay back wages. Mr. Gouveia asked what is the back up plan to educate students in EP should that happen?

Dr. Cirillo answered that everything has been done to stay ahead of curve; he believes we will prevail in ongoing litigation; we heard the scenario painted by the Mayor; this is the reality of the situation. Mr. Gouveia said he hopes there is a plan within the next budget more

than I hope.” Mr. Carcieri said the future will tell what happens. Mrs. Barbosa said the children’s education will be jeopardized. Mr. Carcieri does not know what will happen if bankruptcy occurs. Mayor Larisa said we do not want to go there; a receiver would run the city with a judge and they will balance salary reductions, taxes, and balance the budget; how is unknown, but the schools will still run.

Mr. Gouveia asked what line items will be reduced to make up for the increase in legal expenses.

Dr. Cirillo said he has tried to garner savings through the Bradley program, allow early retirements, reduction of busing out of district; continuing negotiations with bargaining units, and by trying to keep ahead of the curve with this. He explained that he has been very judicious in not eliminating any educational programs; sports are now in session and he hopes for an end to this.

Mr. Gouveia spoke regarding the policy change on public comment; one reason was that it was fashioned after the City Council , but they hold public hearings and the Mayor asks for comments. It is a matter of policy to have a public hearing first and then second passage; maybe comments could change their mind on an issue. He said the School Committee does not explain why they vote nay or aye; he thinks they should make a policy to what is limited to the agenda; why stifle public comment.

Mr. Carcieri explained that the policy allows the School Committee to respond in an accurate way; they are not stifling comments; the basis is for the Committee to have information presented, and the public can watch the business of the School Committee being conducted; the City has been doing it for a long time. Anyone can talk about whatever and they are not being stopped; there can be an open discussion.

Mr. Gouveia wanted to comment on the historic agreement presented tonight; the Chair has the power to stop personal attacks, he noted police presence. He thinks the School Committee does not want public comment or are afraid of it.

Mrs. Barbosa wants what's best for the kids; she said that some of the decisions made by the old School Committee were influenced by other people.

Mr. Gouveia believes the policy is too restrictive.

New Hires v Expenditures vs. Savings v Speaker not present (Jyl Sullivan)

Collective Bargaining/Fiscal Situation v Valerie Lawson v said the present situation in East Providence is that a successor agreement has not been bargained, which is not good for the students and it is being resolved through litigation, not at the table. There are cases

before the Labor Board and in court and the School Committee has spent over \$600,000 in legal fees. Also the reorganization plan provided excessive raises while teachers' salaries were rolled back, which was unfair and unjust. The School Committee sealed minutes tonight, which they requested copies of, and she hopes they will honor the request.

Mr. Carcieri commented regarding collective bargaining; two letters have been sent to lawyers and Ms. Wooley at NEA inviting them to sit down with no response. He will say publicly that the School Committee invites the NEA to sit at the bargaining table. Regarding legal fees, if we were not having this situation, we would not be spending money on lawyers to bring these things in line; these are frivolous complaints and we need a lawyer to defend them ; we can quantify the dollar amount which represents defending ourselves on groundless and failed attempts through which the union did not prevail. Regarding raises, through the Superintendent's reorganization plan , some people took on more responsibilities; the plan will save money. The union is lamenting about raises, but the School Committee did not want to take anyone's money away; he understands why everyone is upset; the NEA tries to make this personal that the School Committee and School Department does not like teachers, but the School Committee is elected by taxpayers and just trying to do a good job. Ms. Lawson felt that concessions should be made everywhere. Mr. Carcieri explained that letters were sent to go back to the table and it has gone back and forth and not resolved;

cities are having financial problems and trying to work it out.

Mr. Phillips spoke about health insurance and a policy which discriminates against married people. Regarding the affidavit, his wife's company will not cover him; he asked what happens if other communities do the same thing. He felt it was morally wrong to take away health coverage, this is a discriminatory practice, and a slippery slope morally and ethically; he is willing to co-pay benefits.

Maureen Conroy ½ Don Avenue ½ 24 years as a teacher ½ wanted to give input on the public comment policy. She has listened to castigation of teachers and thinks that teachers are always willing to negotiate.

Mr. Carcieri asked when teachers were castigated; he said when he was asked about contracts, he said that days of living large with contracts are over and the NEA grabbed it.

She mentioned a letter written by Mr. Amore, which represents dedicated teachers who devote themselves to students.

Mr. Carcieri agreed there are many wonderful teachers and that this is not personal; the School Committee is trying to run the School Department which is no easy job. He does not want the NEA telling the union about the boogeyman who does not like teachers.

A motion was made by Mr. Santos to adjourn , seconded by Mr. Faria.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant

Shannon Barbosa, Clerk of the Committee